



# Texas Psychological Association

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Dear Public Health Committee Members,

The Texas Psychological Association represents the voices of more than 4,500 psychologists practicing in Texas. We are writing today to respond to Interim Charge 1, specifically the monitoring charge for HB 1501 (86<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session).

The members of the Behavioral Health Executive Council (BHEC) have encouraged stakeholder participation and BHEC staff has kept providers well-informed during the pandemic. With that being said, there is a lingering concern from psychologists about the wide disparity in fees between the provider types under BHEC.

As the fee structure currently stands, psychologists are paying roughly three to four times more than what many other providers pay in licensure fees. The disproportionate fees were justifiable prior to the creation of BHEC. Psychologists had a standalone agency, and the cost of funding that agency was paid by psychologists through their application and renewal fees. Other provider groups were housed under the Health and Human Services Commission, thus the overhead costs of their boards were much lower.

Now that all of the provider groups are together under the same umbrella, sharing the same staff and resources, we ask that all providers are treated equally. If there are specific reasons that a psychology license costs more to administer than another licensure type, psychologists are willing to pay the difference. However, the starting point should be equalized fees. Additional costs can be added as needed to address provider-specific programs. As it stands now, the starting point appears to be the fee schedule that applied prior to creation of BHEC, which forces psychologists to bear a disproportionate burden.

Recently, BHEC announced that there will be a task force to address the current fee structure. All stakeholders are invited to participate, and we are hopeful that an equitable solution will come out of those discussions. However, if BHEC is unable to agree on an equitable fee schedule, we ask that the legislature step in to mandate equal treatment of all of mental health providers under BHEC.

Sincerely,

Jessica Magee, Executive Director  
Texas Psychological Association

